

t.r. jackson

BOX ONE, CORINTH, VT. 05037

19th october 1966

ANARCHIST

harold weisberg, esq.
hyattstown md

dear sir:

i haven't been trying to do you out of your \$5....i rarely get around to writing any of the letters which i should, and your case requires an especially long one to satisfy my urge for completeness. as you can see from the above, i am quite prepared to entertain a charge of wickedness against the government, but on the other hand have no great vested interest in vindicating l.h.o., since the government's method of setting up the commission is sufficient ammunition for my argument, and none of the published oswalds - be he cia, fbi, castroite, swf, marxist or walkerite - is particularly endearing. therefore i like to think, at least, that i can be somewhat more objective than most folks who start from an authoritarian bias. after several years further reading, it may even be possible to decide where the truth lies. for the nonce, my tentative conclusion is that l.h.o. was framed, but that in any case the burden of proof lies on the government to show otherwise, if they wish, but that they certainly have not done so to date. you might be interested to learn, by the way, that 'freedom' [the anarchist weekly], in its next issue after the assassination, carried a lengthy article [based only on press sources] casting great doubt on the police 'case'; this at least says something for the validity of anarchist analysis. if you're interested, i would lend you a copy, but i don't have enough to give away.

as for your book, i must say that when i first wrote, i did not order it, i merely asked the price, in case it failed to show up in the library at dartmouth. i'm not rich enough to buy many books, certainly not \$5 paperbacks. the difficult conditions of publishing your own book are understood, but it remains mechanically a poor buy. you don't even provide an index, a common criticism of messrs warren, et al. as your own publisher, you presumably provided the blurbs on inner and outer covers; most authors avoid the blame by saying the publisher wrote them....yours are hardly

models of modesty. in the event, it is just as well that you sent it, as i should not have seen it otherwise.

i did get to hear your first session on wcau, but did not know of the second, and so missed it. i did hear parts of the reply on 1st october, and heard you make the assertion that your book was the first published; in your introduction you are a bit more cautious, but you claim that there have been no 'substantial' books issued. i have not seen joesten's, but certainly fox's [if timid and dull], and buchanan's [if mostly concerned with history and [[clearly labeled]] speculation] books are 'substantial' and attack the government case. i agree entirely that popkin was quite unfair in not giving you due credit, but i do not see that the fact that these other books are not yours makes them unsubstantial...it smacks of commercial rivalry.

the point of this letter, besides transmitting \$5, is to let you have any benefit there may be in a few notes made whilst reading your book:

page 20, par 6: this is a hard point to make, as i am not a parasite [lawyer], but the fact that a roll was consumed in 3 days does not prove that l.h.o. could not have taken the paper, unless it is also known that there were not other rolls from the same batch previously in the depositories stock. your formulation implies a strange shifting of the burden, something like: if they can't prove that it happened, then it couldn't have happened.

page 38, par 3, line 5: "...and 15 seconds less than". presumably, the "than" is spurious.

page 38, par 4: what is a witness in a reconstruction? presumably the witness was a witness to the events at the time, not to a reconstruction.

page 38, par 6: granted, there might be something fishy, but even the implications are not clear. did baker never go inside on that preceeding friday? he can't mean that he has never been in, since truly ran in with him on a-day.

page 38, par 7: does not zapruder's film contradict chaney's claim that the car stopped?

page 39, par 5: the two statements about brennan's description being the basis of the radioed description are the same statement, with different levels of 'positivity' assigned them; i do not see how you can call them 'contradictory'.

page 41, underlined sentence: so what? whether he be kneeling behind a 1' sill, or standing behind a 3' sill, he looks the same from outside.

page 46, par 6: the significance of the wind in the oak tree is clear to me, but i wonder if it is to one and all?

page 50, par 3: i've looked a long time, but i don't see any shadow of youngblood.

page 50, par 4: the stripes are none too clear, but it would appear that the car has reached the 2nd, not merely the 1st.

page 61, par 7: as i remember, it is against p.c. regulations to mail a handgun; if lee got his thru the post, he might not mind such a technicality, but could a mail-order house continue to operate if so scoffing?

page 61, par 8: each of tippit's bullets would have been fatal; is this supported by his autopsy? if so, where?

page 68, par 2: "...with or without question marks..." should read "quotation marks".

page 90, par 5: without listing the possibilities, the sentence: "apparently murderers can see to sight a rifle at night where the police cannot." puzzles me entirely.

page 127, par 5: i wouldn't try to argue the point, since the phrasing is ambiguous, but i should think that both occurrences of 'infer' should be replaced by 'imply', especially the 2nd occurrence.

page 137, par 4: another puzzler: the 'seal of certainty'. do you mean only to emphasize the fact that oswald was dead?

page 138, par 1&2: on the basis of my limited familiarity with the material, i would tend to concur with the commission's conclusion [r374] which you quote. your definition of conspiracy ignores the essential element of the 'privacy' of the combination as well as the connotation of plotting. two drivers involved in a head-on collision are not ordinarily considered to have conspired to produce the wreck. there are no "both counts" in the quoted conclusion for the commission to be wrong on; it is a single assertion. you are apparently willing to consider l.h.o. a "part" of the conspiracy, even if he had merely been [unknowingly] selected as the framing target. to make it more applicable, i suppose that i should extend the above illustration by saying that a pedestrian who is deliberately run down by a motorist is not ordinarily called a co-conspirator.

the tying of the alleged assassination weapon to l.h.o. is not evidence [compelling or otherwise] of any conspiracy to assassinate; in company of other evidence it might be compelling in re: a conspiracy to frame. this last refers to par. 5; after some re-readings, i conclude that this in fact what you were trying to say, in which case my comment is that it was completely unclear to me the first 5 or so readings.

page 167, par 2: whilst acceptance of that filthy phrase 'front entrance' would indeed eliminate the commission & its report, it would not eliminate oswald.

~~page 156/5: altho the report, indeed, does not show it, there may be an advantage to having an empty cartridge in the chamber. as i understand it, the clip must be inserted into the rifle from the top, with the bolt open. in order to then close the bolt for transporting the rifle [assuming that, to minimize the odd bits and pieces~~

ruled out by exhibit 1304

~~one would want the clip & cartridges compactly stowed thus, a live cartridge would be placed in the chamber. on some rifles, at least, when the ndal parts are removed from the stock, the trigger guard remains with the stock, leaving the trigger very exposed below the barrel; this would invite disaster if carried about in a bag with a live shell loaded. the danger could be obviated by loading in an empty.~~

the idea of retaining sufficient cartridges for 'self-defence' seems particularly absurd; without having the chinese hordes at his sides, the only advantage in being armed would be to 'extract a high price for his life'. the only rational defense would be shucking the incriminating evidence &/or flight.

160, par 2: can you clarify the mathematical background of 87 frames + 260'? if the framage corresponds to the period between the supposed fatal shot [fr.313] and papa hooever's calculated frame [410] for the herb shot, $\Delta = 97$, not 87. whence cometh the 260'?

page 158, par 9: on second thot, cancel this one.

most of the above comments are made on your book alone, without reference to outside material. this letter has stretched over several days, and in the meantime i have come across the material in the report on the shipping of the revolver per railway "express", albeit addressed to a p.o. box. i have also had occasion to reread your chapter 12, 'the number of shots', and compare it with the report on the same subject. it seems to me that you have seriously distorted what the report in fact says at several points, or, rather, what the commission says. as a simple example, in the 3rd paragraph of page 157, you paraphrase the commission as saying that it does not matter whether or not the same bullet hit both men. the accurate quotation is in the preceding paragraph; altho it is a non sequitur, presumably written with deliberate intent to deceive, the first part merely says that it doesn't matter which shot hit connally, and the second part merely says that whichever shot it was, it probably got both together. in my opinion, anyone who can read thru the paternal-propaganda style of the report without [in the absence of proof to the contrary] assuming that it is so much hogwash [or, whitewash] is pretty damn gullible. i would suggest that it would behoove critics to keep their noses a bit cleaner by eschewing any remotely similar literary skulduggery.

as it would require some library checking, i won't detail further objections to chapter 12 unless requested, as you have probably heard it all before.

y.f.t.r.,

W. J. F. T. R.